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few days since in the hands of a man here, who acts as an agent for the jewellers in your city who trade in Art. I may have been mistaken; at all events, they cannot be sold unless they are finished. I suppose the agent can find some one to do that satisfactorily to the trade.

"T—m is a young sculptor, seized with the Pre-Raphaelite mania. In a spirit of true faith he has just modelled a lame man. He picked up his subject in the 'highways and by-ways,' because he was the first man he encountered that would pose for him at a low rate (T—m is obliged to be economical). When his model was completed in clay, H—, our most distinguished sculptor, who takes a pride in the encouragement of young genius, called to see the performance. He praised it as remarkably truthful, but doubted if such a subject would find a purchaser. T—m said that was no fault of his; 'people must learn to love truth.'

"The most exciting circumstance, however, of our Art sphere lies in the fact of Q—p having a picture on his easel (perhaps, on his wall; not being permitted to enter his studio, I can't tell which), that he has been engaged upon some years. Rumor says it is a development of Art upon an entirely new principle. He has invited a clergyman, a doctor, a lawyer, and the lady correspondent of an American newspaper, to visit his studio, and see the pictorial principle. I understand they are all delighted except the lawyer (whom I am acquainted with), and he is *non com.** in the matter, for the reason, as he says, 'that he knows nothing about Art, any way.' We are all in high glee at Q—p's success. As soon as he allows us artists to see his work, we mean to get up an institution, make him president, and appoint the clergyman as chaplain, which, by the way, is an office that should be attached to every Art-institution, if for no other reason than to symbolize in modern times the paternal solicitude of the church for Art in the middle ages.

"There are still a number of interesting incidents, but time warns me to close if this is to go by the steamer. So far off from tide water, you are aware, we can take no liberties.

"Yours, P."

The following account of an artist's and amateur's social gathering in London will, to those interested in clubs, etc., devoted to similar ends, serve as a useful hint. The writer says, in the letter we extract from :

"These *conversazione* seem to be established mostly by amateurs with a view to social enjoyment, as well as for the encouragement of Art and the development of a taste for Art. There is always a fine suite of rooms provided, well ventilated, and so arranged as to exhibit the works of artists to the best advantage. There is a refreshment-room, and sometimes a lecture-room connected with the hall in which the company assemble; the refreshments are of the simplest kind. The lecture is always short, and upon some interesting subject appertaining to Art. (These *conversazione* are generally full-dress gatherings, and ladies form an important part.) There is a screen arranged expressly to show sketches on, easily removed when not in use, extending all around the large hall, upon which are placed two or three rows of sketches. The works of each artist are kept by themselves, and a large card with his name on, is attached to each group; thus at a glance enabling visitors to see who have contributed to their entertainment. Down through the

middle of the rooms are tables upon which are placed a kind of rack or easel, on which are exhibited both sketches and pictures, always arranged with great taste and care, the contributors having the privilege of arranging their own works. Sometimes the most beautiful pictures are arranged on easels. In addition to these, portfolios are so placed as to be looked over to the best advantage. I do not know what arrangement is made for defraying the expenses of the society, but I presume it is borne by members. In the winter season these meetings take place once a month. The most distinguished artists contribute, also people possessing beautiful pictures. In such cases the names of the contributors are given as well as the artist's. Invitations to these gatherings are always extended to such persons as may be considered desirable for the interest of the society, for which cards are issued, and great strictness is observed in regard to admissions, a book being kept at the door in which visitors' names are entered. The benefits of such *conversazione* can be easily imagined."

THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, APRIL, 1857.

Our friends will please observe, that on and after this date the Publishing and Editorial Offices of THE CRAYON are located at No. 818 BROADWAY, N.Y. Having made arrangements with Mr. W. HOLLINGSWORTH to manage the business department of THE CRAYON, all letters and communications pertaining to the business matters of THE CRAYON are to be addressed to him: letters upon editorial business to be directed to the undersigned as heretofore. In both cases our friends will oblige us by adding the words "care of THE CRAYON" to the respective addresses.

For the convenience of residents in the upper part of the city, an office for subscriptions, etc., will be continued at the Book-store of Mr. F. W. CHRISTIE, of whom the numbers can be procured as issued.

Wholesale agents, MEERS, DEXTER & BROTHER, No. 14 Ann street.
J. DURAND,
Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, April 1st, 1857.

Sketchings.

DOMESTIC ART GOSSIP.

Mrs. FANNY KEMBLE has signified her intention to give the proceeds of one evening's reading of Shakespeare to the Boston Art Club, which intention, we presume, will have been carried out before this number leaves the press. The effect of this generous action upon the public will be advantageous to the Club. The sympathy of genius always quickens the tardy sympathies of the public, which too frequently needs the stimulus of mediatory acts like this one.

The above allusion to the Boston Art Club here affords us an opportunity to publish a letter from Boston with an anonymous signature, containing many plain truths on the philosophy of lecturing. We allow the writer to speak for himself:

BOSTON, March, 1857.

Dear Crayon:
The experiment of a course of Art lectures has been put to a test in Boston the past season, and with such equivocal success as to be little, better than a failure. Peculiarly they were certainly such, for the Art Club, under whose direction they were given, have disbursed some, two or three hundred dollars that have brought no return. This has been owing partly to the disadvantages that accrued from the course commencing too late in the season; partly to their bad luck in the weather, which prevented the sale of tickets at the door, and to the happening of great rival attractions on the same evenings; but

* Non commital, we presume our correspondent means.

chiefly I am inclined to think, to the wrong basis upon which the scheme was started. It was thought that no success could be obtained unless by catering to the public's curiosity for seeing celebrities, and the popular inclination for running after favorite lecturers. By this they at once entered into a competition with older Institutions, whose very members could take up a thousand or two tickets at once, while the Art Club depended wholly upon outside support. Of course their chance that way was very unequal. Moreover, these popular lecturers being secured, they were in duty bound to write, as probably few of them had ever done before, with one eye to the speciality of *Art*, and the other to the probability of making the same lecture do for the first country lyceum they were next invited to speak before. The consequence was that when the list was announced to the friends of Art in Boston, they shook their heads and said, "What do most of these men know about *Art* more than we do—professed lecturers who have a stock of manuscripts for all occasions?" So but a few of them came forward to its support; and thus, as the saying goes, between the stools they fell to the ground; for the populace got their money's worth more acceptably at the Mercantile Library's course, and the discriminating appreciators of Art were better pleased in their easy chairs at home, with a volume of Ruskin on their knees, mayhap. The only good that the course has done is, that the Art Club have been brought through it into more notice with the public, who have learned that there is a body of artists in their midst, and they, in turn, have gathered from its want of success, experience for their future guidance. I must be understood as passing no judgment on the lectures in themselves, but only upon their *kind*; as not distinctively in accordance with that specialty which should have been the marked feature of the course—with an exception or two.

The founders of a course of lectures on Art should bear it in mind, that Art is not a popular subject, and cannot command of *itself* an indiscriminate audience of any profitable size, and allowing there is a clear field to attempt to force it upon the public's curiosity by dragging out favorite speakers, that they *will* run after, is at once a betrayal of the proper dignity that belongs inherently to Art, and which will not willingly condescend to huckster. It is only to the sympathizing few in the community that such an appeal can go of its own accord, and they are too cultured to be ensnared in such a way. They want only such to speak to them who have become either professionally, or by sympathy, identified with Art in some of its branches, or in all; whose study of it has been from love, and not for the purpose of lecturing. Words from such persons only can be of value to them.

The Boston Art Club exists now on a good foundation. They are granted a controlling influence in the exhibitions of the Athenaeum, which is beneficial to both parties concerned, and equally so to the public. They are united in fellowship, and mean to do a good thing, which I have no doubt they will eventually accomplish. Failures in one direction or another are only necessary results at first, and the provocation of better things thereafter. I think myself that they should abandon the idea of public lectures for the present, at all events, and for the next season attempt nothing more than to fill their fine hall in Bedford street (which will hold some two or three hundred) with their friends, extending also invitations to the known sympathizers with them in the community at large, to listen once a week to a lecture adapted to such an audience, and to no other. They have sufficient talent among themselves to have each of the Arts discussed acceptably upon by their representatives in their own number, and I have no doubt there are many professed admirers and students of *Art* out of the professions, who, before such an appreciative audience, would gladly give the club the benefit of what they may have to say. A piano in their ante-room, played by some of their own number, and the show of pictures upon their walls, would soon make these evenings choicely known in the community, till it should become a cause of rejoicing to be the possessor of an invitation to them. This is only a suggestion of my own; others may be expressed to them, and,

perhaps better ones; but, at all events, let the management be discreet, and proper dignity be preserved, and I look to a future of importance for the Boston Art Club.

That the lectures of the club have not proved pecuniarily successful we much regret, for they eminently deserved success. So far, however, as Art in the abstract is concerned, theory and experience lead us to put no faith in any attempt to catch the public ear for Art purposes based upon the modes commonly used to attract public attention. As yet there is no such thing in the country as public Art, scarcely a building, a gallery, a monument, or a work of any kind to which the eyes of the public can be directed as an eminent example of elevated Art. The American people in the aggregate, or subdivided into communities, do not care a straw about the *subject* of Art. When time shall enable lecturers to direct the eye to Art *things*, the public ear will listen to Art *thoughts*, and not till then. The case is very different in Europe, where a speaker can point to five illustrations for every one he needs, there his voice carries meaning with it. Artists here, for years to come, must work instead of talking, or if "out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," let the mouth speak where an audience can be secured to it.

THE BOSTON ART CLUB having made arrangements with the Boston Athenaeum for a joint exhibition, it will open on the 13th of April. Contributions must be received by the authorized agent of the club in New York on or before March 31. We believe Mr. L. R. Menger, No. 12 Dey street, is the agent. The expenses of transportation of pictures and of their return will be borne by the Athenaeum. Each picture must be accompanied by its title, name of the artist, and the price—if for sale. The exhibition will continue open till late in the autumn; but pictures will be returned at any time after July 1, at the request of the contributor. Communications may be addressed (care of the Boston Athenaeum) to F. D. Williams, Cor. Sec. Boston Art Club.

We hear from Boston, that Mr. CHAMPNEY has lately completed a picture of Mount Washington under a wintry aspect; and that the painting has been presented to the Rev. T. Starr King, by some of his parishioners.

Mr. GAY has just finished a view of the Haystack Mountain, in Vermont.

THE statue of General Warren, by Dexter, will be inaugurated on the 17th June, under the auspices of the Bunker Hill Monument Association.

MR. BALL has added to his collection a bust of the late Dr. Peabody, and has in progress a model for an equestrian statue of Washington, which promises to be worthy of acceptance by the city of Boston, for their beautiful common.

HORACE VERNET, the distinguished French artist, is about to visit this country, with reference to professional employment by our national government. His arrival, we are told, may be looked for some time in the month of May. So far as we have been able to learn, our artists generally hear of his visit with great satisfaction. France aided the United States in the days of its struggle for independence, and it is, therefore, no more than a fitting compliment to employ a French artist to commemorate the services of that nation by painting on the walls of a national building one of the battle-scenes in which the French troops were engaged. The proposed picture, we understand, is destined for an appropriate space in the Capitol extension; the selection of subject will, of course,

depend upon the judgment of the artist. In regard to terms, etc., we do not believe any of the absurd rumors in circulation.

From Philadelphia we learn that the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts has received another picture, by Witkamp, of Antwerp. The subject is "Dathen Preaching before the Walls of Ghent." It will be one of the attractions at the Spring exhibition. The Academy has also purchased Edward H. May's picture of the "Dying Brigand," and Weber's large landscape, which was so much admired at the last exhibition. This institution, which has already provided such ample materials and facilities for the education of the student of Art, is now turning its attention to the formation of a permanent gallery of modern Art, and it behoves our artists who desire to be represented on its walls, to be willing exhibitors thereon; as we understand purchases will only be made from the walls of their Spring Exhibitions.

We understand that Mr. Neagle, who has been suffering for a long time from a severe illness, has so far recovered as to enable him to pursue his professional calling; he has just finished his large portrait of Bishop Meade, of Virginia, intended for the Theological Seminary at Alexandria.

Mr. J. R. Lambdin has just completed a portrait of Mr. Geo. Peabody, the eminent London Banker; it is intended, we believe, for a public institution in Philadelphia.

Four artists of this city have been commissioned by Wm. P. Wright, Esq., to paint each a picture to form a series representing respectively the Artists, Men of Science, Literary men, and Merchants of our country. Mr. Baker will paint the Artists; Mr. Huntington, the Savans; Mr. Hicks, the Literary characters; and Mr. Rossiter, the Merchants. The paintings, when finished, will be exhibited and engraved. The size of each canvas we believe is to be 9 by 14 feet. The commission is a very liberal one, and certainly a very creditable one to Mr. Wright.

Messrs. EBINGER and MIGNOT have been engaged conjointly upon a picture called, "The Foray;" the figures by Mr. Ebinger, and the landscape by Mr. Mignot. A party of Puritans are represented on horseback and on foot, returning from a successful foray. A cow with a calf leading the group, and a dead sheep strung over a horse's back, with other plunder, indicate the spoils. The composition of the picture shows good management, and the respective departments of landscape and figures are very happily treated. We are glad to see partner-ships like this painted.

MR. J. G. CHAPMAN has sent from Rome four pictures, which serve to keep him fresh in our memory. One is a view in the Borghese Gardens, representing an avenue of the Italian pine tree; and the rest portray aspects of life peculiar to the Italian peasantry, such as Gleaning on the Campagna, a Vintage scene, and the sports of children in domestic life.

We regret that we have nothing new to communicate to our readers in regard to the health of Mr. Crawford, who is now in Paris. The nature of his malady appears to be such that time alone can test the opinions of his physicians. His present condition is a favorable one, and his friends feel still more encouraged at the prospect of ultimate recovery.

We understand that the architects of this city have determined to organize an association, and procure a charter, with a view to developing the resources of their profession to an extent somewhat more in keeping with the degree of public

encouragement extended to this branch of the Fine Arts. It is a most excellent move, and one that cannot fail to be productive of satisfactory results.

MR. HUNTINGTON has lately completed a portrait of the Hon. Julian C. Verplanck, at the request of the Commissioners of Emigration: he is now painting one of A. B. Durand, Esq., for the Century Club.

MR. J. G. STEARNS has on his easel a picture representing a scene in one of the New York ship-yards.

MR. C. L. ELLIOTT is painting a full-length portrait of ex-Governor Seymour, to be placed in the governor's room of the City Hall.

THE Palmer Marbles will continue on exhibition until the last week in April. If there be any of our readers who have not yet seen this collection, we strongly recommend them not to forego the opportunity.

A FRIEND sends us the following items: "DUGAN seems improving slowly; CHORSEY has a small picture of 'Niagara' in the exhibition of the British Institution, London; J. Cameron Stone, Esq., has purchased, at Rome, MOZINE's statue of 'Rebecca'; ROGERS had his statues of 'Ruth' and 'Nydia' well advanced."

AMONG MR. F. S. PERKINS's studies we find many that give us a hint of the peculiar aspects of American landscape in the Far West. They are composed of prairie views and studies of individual trees, besides studies of groups of prairie-flowers, familiar to us by name in the poetry of Bryant and others. Mr. Perkins has nice perception, and he is a faithful delineator of the objects he studies.

MR. J. WILSON, sculptor, has just completed a small model for a statue of Robert Fulton, a statue to whom we hope to see some day erected in our midst. New York certainly owes a statue to Fulton. He deserves it far more than any of the politicians or generals whose claims seem to be so easily recognized.

MR. S. ELLIS, a sculptor, best known by his success in small medallions, exhibits in his studio a number of this description of portraits, representing many well-known individuals of our community. We would especially name one of William Page, and another of the late Isaac T. Hopper. Mr. Ellis also cuts in cameos. A cameo portrait of Mr. Oddie, the painter, struck us as remarkably fine. We would also mention a bust in marble of Dr. Carnochan, also by Mr. Ellis.

MR. EDWIN WHITE has been requested by the State of Maryland to paint a picture representing "Washington resigning his commission as Commander-in-chief of the American forces," at the termination of the Revolutionary war. This event took place in Annapolis, the capital of the State, and the picture is intended to decorate the room which was the scene of the occurrence.

CAN anybody inform us concerning the nature and conditions of the following appointment?

COLLEGIATE APPOINTMENTS.—Mr. Charles C. Perkins, of Boston, has been appointed Lecturer on Art in Trinity College, at Hartford.

THE Clay Monument Association, of Lexington, Ky., have adopted a design for a monument in honor of Henry Clay. It will be a column one hundred and nineteen feet in height, with a colossal statue on the summit. This is bad taste. No statue in the open air should ever be so placed as not to be distinctly seen from the ground.

We are in entire ignorance as to the success or character of the exhibition in the city of Washington.

We would direct the attention of our readers to the advertisement of E. I. Cook on the fourth page of the cover.

MADAME CORA DE WILHORST.

Several young ladies have lately left their own quiet and tired fire-sides, to seek a sphere of usefulness on the stage. The gulf lying between family life and that of the stage is generally regarded as being so great that such a thing could not take place without giving rise to much excitement. Every one has his own reason for this occurrence, but is any one of these reasons satisfactory, or does it fairly represent the event itself? Most of them are purely personal, reflecting either on the young lady herself, her father, or mother, or both. It seems to us, however, that if such things were due to parental neglect or deficiency that we should have to widen the dimensions of the stage to that of the city itself in order to make room for those that would crowd upon it.

Those who reason in this way take it for granted that everything within the family circle is immaculate, and everything on the stage corrupt; that everything within the family circle is refined and elevated, and everything on the stage vulgar and degraded. But is it so? have our prejudices no share in our judgments, our conventional notions no bearing on our point of view? Would Jenny Lind or Mrs. Siddons have paid more homage to virtue by living by the fire-side than they did by treading the stage? That which has made them an exception to the prejudices of the world as against their calling, can, and will, and does make others too. The corruptions of the stage have no conventional cloaks like those of the family circle, no sympathetic eye to overlook, no pitying voice to palliate a fault, a foible, or a sin. A rich husband, a fashionable church, a gorgeous stone house, a luxurious and fashionable array of acquaintances, and a betrayed group of children, have frequently covered a long continued series of crimes that have had scarcely a parallel in the life of the stage. In fact the stage is frequently held up to scorn for the very evils that equally prevail in private circles; but we are rash enough to think that the stage is more generally a true index to the moral condition and sense of the community, than people are willing to admit. Take the humblest class of females on the stage, and if they are corrupt, who have corrupted them? Most generally men of wealth and position in the private ranks of life, and men, too, who are always the loudest in condemning and imprecating them. How true it is that nothing is so hateful to us as the things we have degraded. Let the community itself be really morally sound and virtuous, and we shall surely have the stage to be so likewise.

But there is another conventionality of view and opinion which we must also notice.

The painter, the sculptor, the musician, the actor, and the *littératuré* are looked upon generally as holding an inferior position on the social scale, while the provision, the dry-goods, and hardware merchant, the grocer, and bookseller, and the importer are marked up the highest on it. Now is this due to anything but a stupid prejudice, or a weak, unreasoning conventionality? We think not. We think it could be easily shown that both on the head and the heart the calling of the artist has a much more genial and beneficial effect than that of the merchant, that while the calling of the latter stimulates to great physical efforts and undertakings, that of the former

develops the intellect, and opens out broader outlets for the affections; and it is only through the right cultivation and direction of these that man can reach to a position of moral dignity too potent for debasing temptations. It is better, however, to avoid invidious distinctions, and to look upon every individual doing his work well and conscientiously, as being on a footing of equality with every other individual, so long as he has the same moral claim to a position in the social body. And arrived at this stage of our remarks, we shall take the liberty of speaking of the lady whose name stands at the head of this article. In doing so we shall neither express nor imply anything derogatory to any person whatever that may be connected with her by family ties, as we believe her present position, rightly understood, is not inferior to the position of those that would reflect upon it, or in any way, if she be true to it, calculated to dishonor the social pretensions of any body belonging to her.

Madame de Wilhorst has evidently an innate artistic-aptitude, and this she must have given evidence of long before she ever contemplated going on the stage. She must have been long and continuously devoted to music, as according with her own nature, before any external circumstances of life made her lean upon it as a means of subsistence. In fact, the latter could never be the cause of the former, and is in this case, as in many others, but coincident with it. We look upon her present calling, then, as the one most adapted to her own natural aptitudes; and if this be the case, we are sure she will be happier in it and more useful than in any other. The efforts of the musical artist, as of every other, has a much deeper influence than is generally supposed. Those who look upon them as ending in mere amusement, in fashionable pastime, or worldly ostentation, know nothing of Art, or of its intimate relationship to humanity, or of the civilizing instinct which has eternally married it to all that is good in our natures. The value of other pursuits is measured by pecuniary gain, and as this is purely material, appealing to flesh and blood, everybody, however ignorant, understands it and idolizes it. But the effects of Art are veiled from the eye of flesh and blood as the growing power of the seed while beneath the ground. We must have a peculiar sense for it, as we have for the perfume of a rose, or the odor of a good man's life unsunned by public applause. Art is not so much honored by those who profess it, as those are by the Art they profess to follow, and the community is greatly mistaken when it supposes that Madame de Wilhorst has descended from her social position by becoming an artist, or that her character is impaired by it. There is more in her Art to feed her moral nature, to strengthen it, to make her happy, than is to be found in the position of most of women within the private circles of domestic life. How many women pine away from want of affinity with their rich husbands, how many are betrayed into vicious habits out of disengagement with their family conditions. Few business men have much of life other than that of physical, and when this is exhausted, what have they to take home to their own families. Alas! nothing but a fatigued body, which requires only a supper to put it into a deep sleep that is unconscious of family duties, claims, or enjoyments.

We, therefore, say to Madame de Wilhorst, persevere in your profession, be true to its austere requirements—true to its artistic dignity—true to its moral bearing and purpose, and, then, the ignorance of the world will receive an intelligent reproach, its prejudices be unanchored, and its false pride made

sick. Already Madame de Wilhorst has given earnest evidence of her love of her Art in the beautiful roles of "Lucia," "Amina," and the "Vivandière." Her vocal interpretation of these parts augur great future success, and show an amount of study and application that should serve as a severe reproach to many of her quondam friends, associates, and listeners. She is yet, artistically, but in the bud of her profession; the blossoming and flowering have yet to come, and it will be her own fault if the latter are not worthy representatives of the former. There is an incompatibility between her profession and that of being a good daughter, wife, and mother, except in the corrupt imaginations of fashionable worldlings; and we say to her, be a true artist in these relationships, too, and then the stage may set an example worthy of all imitation to many an indolent, indifferent, and immoral member of our private domestic circles.

GLEANINGS AND ITEMS.

THE NEW CENT.—We have seen an advance specimen of this new coinage. It is a little larger than the ten cent piece, has a color approaching silver, and in general effect, to our mind, is the handsomest coin we have. Its mechanical execution is also very superior. But here we must halt in its praise. The design and its details are not such as should emanate from a government establishment which has all the resources that can be possibly brought to bear upon such works of Art. We believe everybody has learned to despise the vulgar commonplaces which disfigure the three cent piece. The new cent is a great improvement upon this. The obverse is intended to represent a profile view of the American eagle flying. But the bird looks like a buzzard or a hen, or anything else but an eagle. This choice illustration of what American Art can do, was originally made for the gold dollar, but it was so universally ridiculed that it was soon withdrawn, and the few that were coined have disappeared. We feel inclined, however, to praise even this attempt, since it is a step towards substituting truthful delineation of national objects for the worn out, and, in this Republic, entirely inappropriate insignia of heraldry. So far, this attempt is significant of improving taste, and may be referred to hereafter as a pioneer in the great revolution that must sooner or later overtake the whole of our coinage. We can make out the design on the reverse more by what we think it should be than by what can be gathered from its obscure and ill-arranged jumble of plants. We judge the wreath to be composed of the staples, corn, wheat, cotton, and tobacco. We are most puzzled to decide which is corn and which tobacco. By an ignorant arrangement of the artist the wreath is made to terminate by the largest plants, instead of gracefully tapering by a natural gradation from large to little. But this we could forgive if it was possible to make out what objects are meant to be represented.

We are more willing that this coin should be regarded by posterity as an example of the Art of the present day, than any other which has been issued in the present generation.

An appropriation of two thousand dollars, we understand, has been made by the Legislature of New York to found a medal in honor of Dr. Kane. The medal is to be of gold, and no provision is made for duplicating it in bronze or otherwise. The entire sum allotted is to be used up in modelling, casting, engraving and chasing a medal, instead of preparing a suitable die. One of the greatest uses of medals is to commemorate memorable events in such enduring form that acci-

dents of time may not destroy them. When one considers how much history is indebted to medals and coins, he will see the folly and ignorance of placing this one in a form which, from the value of its material alone, is liable to perish. It is the custom of European governments, and not unusual in this country, to make numerous duplicates of medals, for such general distribution as to secure their perpetuity. We hope that this may be thought of in time to rescue the Kane medal. We know that the modelling of this medal has been put into competent hands. It will be too good a thing to be lost.

COUNTRY CORRESPONDENCE.

X.—, February, 1857.

The Farm-House Fire-side.

THE artist, my dear CRAYON, painting from his last "season's" sketches in his city studio, lives over his summer rambles during the winter. It is somewhat strange how prone men are to run into these contrasts. There is a natural inclination to picture around us mentally the very reverse of what our physical vision dwells upon. Heine typified the phenomenon in that little bit of humanized nature, where he makes a desolate fir-tree, shrouded with Arctic snows, dream of a brother-palm in some burning tropic clime. We say this is a common impulse with men, but assuredly no individuals have that facility and opportunity that belongs to the artist, who, easel before him, blotsches in the roughings of his memory, and glazes them down into harmony and warmth, with the power of an emerging sun.

Summer is the only time,—and by summer we mean to include those portions of spring and autumn which are warm enough for out-of-door study—in which an artist has the opportunity of making those chosen copies of scenery and effects which are to serve him in his studio compositions. The very rigidity of a winter's day precludes the possibility of any extensive familiarity with Nature, which can come of slow, humble, and devotional study of her. Man has not generally the love for wintry nature that he possesses for that instinctive with life, which is the probable reason of the lesser number of winter landscapes that we see, in which there is too much broad expanse and monotony to claim the eye of a picturesque painter. But the decided inferiority of them as works of Art and representations of Nature, is probably owing to the difficulties that prevent a close companionship with Nature when she dons her hoary aspect:

I, for one, like the seasons in their turns, or at least I can see why they should be liked. Certain results render spring and summer obnoxious to my bodily comfort, and it is only upon an autumnal or wintry landscape that I look without misgivings. So there are reasons why I should like this chilly, glittering Nature as I see it, from my windows; and there is a shadow of excuse for my preferring to the actual the summer landscapes that I picture in the twilight of a blustering February night-fall.

It needs no exaggeration to set forth the gloriousness of the scene I looked upon this afternoon. The snow had fallen in a driving gale, and the little feathery clouds that played in the wind along the ridges of the drifts marked them, where otherwise they had remained, unseen in the uniform expanse of blankness. The angles of the mill had given the whirling impulse, and high up, bending like the comb of a wave, a huge drift lay along its side. The meadow was one broad sheet of snow, its few solitary trees stood like forsaken humanities; and only the forest of evergreens that bound the distance bore up their snowy burdens. All trace of the river was lost now and then a breaking in of shadow, that seemed to mark the inequalities of its banks, appearing at intervals in its stretch across the meadow. But the sight of all, and one that fixed the eyes, was beyond this. Along the south, above the line of the forest, there was a bank of clouds, rising in jagged upheaval, strong in the light and shade of their misty precipices, tinged with the flush of evening on their summits, all adown whose sides I fancied glittering glaciers and rocky

walls—the very counterpart of some Alpine range. I sat and gazed on this till twilight gloomed the distance, and left in sight but here and there a glare from my icy mountains, that seemed like some stray nebulae earthward wandering.

All the while the farmer sat by the hearth-stone, strumming on his fiddle-strings, and nodding gravely to his grotesque self, as it broadened and lengthened in the brass globe-top of the andirons.

"John, John!" cried his wife, as she quickly opened the door "what can a woman do all alone, while you sit there roasting your eyes out?"

"Why, my dear," said the poor man, in a tone as if to say, "why what's the matter now?"

"I want some water to put in the kettle, and you know it, and would like to see me, I warrant, flounder up to my knees in snow all the way to the well."

"My dear," said Farmer John.

"Sam," she cried, catching a glimpse of that urchin strapping on his skates behind the rocking-chair. "I see ye, and know what ye'd be doing, cutting my new carpet all up with those skates. Take 'em off this minute!"

"Well, well, well," said the farmer, coaxingly, as he turned her round, and followed her towards the kitchen; not preventing, however, her calling after Sam to go for an armful of wood, while the youth, giving a shudder in anticipation, shuffled sluggishly out of the room after the old people.

* * * * *

Nature has never more unmistakably a sentiment than in her wintry landscapes; and it is one of the wonders of education, that fashion exercises the right of telling an emotional being how he shall be affected by any natural phenomenon. One would think that in gazing upon a broad wintry scene, in which Nature has upbraided us for notions of Mine and Thine by covering up all traces of landmarks and divisional lines, all men would be impressed with something of that calm quiet that belong to Utopian climes, where societies live in union and harmony. But the requirements of Arcadian summers seem to some (many of whom give up their own emotional birth right to the pleadings of pastoral poets) to be the only aspects of nature that deserve from man any recognition at all. Such will find their text in Pope and his school :

"Behold the groves that shine with silver frost,
Their beauty withered, and their verdure lost."

Such language lacks the picturesque. Mere general statements do not assist the imagination, but only tell it in what region it must work unassisted. A single characteristic minutia, that implies generalities, designates their quality more effectually than all such broad expressions as "snow-clad landscapes" and "wastes of ice." Nor do we want the sentiments of a sanitary registrar, as in Thomson—

"The winter days,
Killing infectious damps, and the spent air
Boring fresh with elemental life."

Johnson, in his Ode to Winter, indulges in the same unpoetic truisms.

"No more the morn with tepid rays
Unfolds the flower of varled hue;
Noon spreads no more the genial blaze,
Nor gentle eye distills the dew," etc.

The juxtaposition of summer and winter is not such in any mind as to require dull enumerations of what winter is *not*, to give an idea of what winter *is*. But Johnson never lived in any dread of going crazy from the poetic passion. Thomson was before Johnson; but he inaugurated a transition from Pope's school, to which Johnson clung.

"Through the hushed air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering, till at last the flakes
Fall broad and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherished fields
Put on their winter robe of purest white."

"Tis brightness all, save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low the woods
Bow their hoary head; and ere the languid sun,
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face deep-hid and chill,
Is one wide dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man."

That was a rendering of general effects; but something pre-Raphaelite was to come. Take these "signs of winter" from Crabbe—

"When on the thorn, the ripening sloe, yet blue,
Takes the bright varnish of the morning dew,
The aged moss grows brittle on the pale,
The dry boughs splinter in the windy gale."

Here a few effects realize their concomitants, and present a vivid picture to the imagination, which it could not fill up from blank generalities. The old rhetorical figure of a part put for a whole, is never more effective than in word-painted scenery. Our American Street has plied his pencil-peep upon such scenes with admirable care for detail. We can select but one or two study-bits :

"Yon rustic bridge
Bristles with icicles; beneath it stand
The cattle-group, long pausing while they drink
From the ice-hollowed pool, that *skin in sheets*
Of delicate glass, and *shivering as the air*.
Cuts with keen stinging edge; and those gaunt trucks,
Bending with rugged branches o'er the bank,
Sewn with their mocking scars of chilling white
Mourning for the green grass and fragrant flowers,
That summer mirrors in the rippling flow
Of the bright stream beneath them."

Take another—

"The morning rises up,
And lo! the dazzling picture! every tree
Seems carved from steel, the silent hills are helmed,
And the broad fields have breast-plates. Over all
The sunshine flashes in a keen white blaze
Of splendor, searing eye-sight. Go abroad!
The branches yield *creep cracklings*, now and then
Sending a shower of rattling diamonds down
On the mailed earth, as freshens the light wind.
The hemlock is a stooping bower of ice,
And the oak seems as though a fairy's wand
Away had swept its skeleton frame, and placed
A polished structure, *trembling* o'er with tints
Of rainbow beauty there. But soon the sun
Melts the enchantments, like a charm away."

We hold that Thomson, in as many lines, never wrote so many apt expressions of natural effects.

But I must stop here. The farmer has got the jug of cider out—a sure sign of bed-time with us. His good wife has wound up her yarn, and stuck the ball in the ends of her knitting-needles. Here comes my sparkling mugful, pushed over to my side of the table. My dear CRAYON, I drink to your prosperity. Good night.

W. J.

The following extract from a letter received by a friend from a young artist of great talent, though still but little known, will be read with interest. We have heard of more than one disappointment similar to that experienced by the writer.

P.—, Dec. 28th, 1856.

MY DEAR W.—: From an artist's studio you should not be surprised to receive a letter written with any out-of-the-way bit of artist material that may be convenient—be it pen, pencil, or crayon, black or red. Or, the letter may be like the coat Joseph's father made for him of many colors; for, unlike that clerk of the East India House, surnamed the "gentle," the artist is not confined to black and red, when he chooses to play the motley. At this moment there lies before me pencil white, yellow, red and blue, green, orange, purple, and brown. And the artist's box is not unlike the artist's life; in both, the colors of the bow of Hope lie side by side with earthy browns and the grey of the grave. It may be that artist-nature, like his smoothly

spread ground, receives, with greater aptness, the lights and shadows laid upon it, which, thrown upon the ledger of the merchant, or the iron of the mechanio, would be invisible. As the eye of the *Farben-Künstler*, or the ear of the *Ton-Künstler*, receives pleasure or pain from little things unregarded by all others.

I made the other day a visit to the clouds, flying higher than ever I am wont, and was cast down again with a proportionately great fall; the very hand that exalted me, hurling me down again. One evening, when at Mr. N——'s house, he asked me to accompany him the next day to a house he was building in the country. "For," said he, "I was thinking of getting you to fresco the ceilings of one or two of the rooms." A few words more passed, when the person with whom I had come, prepared to leave; so I went home with my head filled with pictures to be painted, and for thinking of them I could not sleep. "The clouds are now opening," I said to myself, "now will the sun of Fortune show me his continual light; another Julius II., in the person of N——, calls me to decorate his palace. The library and dining-room, or, to speak properly, the refectory, are waiting for my pencil. How shall they be treated?" The gas-pipes would probably prevent a large centre-piece, so with ornamental bands I will divide the ceiling into four triangular compartments, each of which can contain a subject to occupy the whole, or to be confined to medallions described with the triangles. For the subjects of the library, perhaps Theology, Philosophy, Poetry, and History would be appropriate, or notable settings forth of truth: Paul preaching before Felix, might be one; the Sending forth of the Disciples should be another. For the dining-room something lighter—the four Seasons, or the four Ages, or some illustrations of the Poets." Before I awoke the next morning everything was nicely arranged, some of the subjects were composed. I met Mr. N—— as appointed, and taking his carriage, we started off.

What put this idea into Mr. N——'s head you may wonder as I did. I account for it thus: T——, when in Washington, saw the frescoes which some foreign artists are executing there, from Classic and American History. He told me about them, and said if he could afford it he would have his house painted, and talked not a little of them. I suppose he also spoke to Mr. N—— on the subject, and perhaps even proposed to him to get me to do something in that line at his new house. Well, as we went along, Mr. N—— asked me some questions about frescoes; I told him the difference between fresco, distemper, and stereocromic. When I was through, he said, "What colors do you like best upon a ceiling?" Queer question, I thought; and replied that "as it depended on so many things—room, subject, etc., it would be impossible to answer." "How long would it take to paint a ceiling?" This was very much like "How long would it take to write a poem, or to make a journey?" I answered as I best could. Then followed one or more questions, when all at once it dawned upon me that he wanted the ceiling *white, with some curly queues in the corners*. Quicker than light flies I fell, and oh! what a fall! That brother's brother of the Arabian tale, who, from an imaginary throne, suddenly found himself the owner of a few broken panes of glass, could not have felt much smaller than I did at that moment. I did not jump out of the carriage, and rush home; but when I did get home I had something like a head-ache, and that day passed without any work upon my picture. *

Studies among the Leaves.

We value that criticism most which is *felt out*. To criticise by rules, is only to pronounce our judgment in accordance with the results of what others have *felt out*, and not we ourselves, unless, indeed, the rules are of our own forming, and then we err as much in gauging individual instances with a measure that may have been proportioned by others quite unlike,

Feeling is as certainly as much a requisite with the critic of Art, as with the artist himself. Nor do we conceive it any objection that men feel differently towards the same object, for that difference is the result of their own individuality, and we like personal responsibility as much in our poetic as in our prosy life. As long as men tell us how they *feel* towards Art, we must expect contrarieties, and to have the rules of compensation brought into frequent use. Diversities of opinions are as much needed for the purification and enlivenment of Art as of other things, and her historians and commentators will find their note books marked with numerous offsetting passages. As for instances, take this from Mrs. Jameson (*Diary of an Ennuyeuse*, under date, Nov. 15):

"There is a picture by Michael Angelo, considered a *chef-d'œuvre*, which hangs in the Tribune, to the right of the Venus; how if all the connoisseurs in the world, with Vasari at their head, were to harangue for an hour, together on the merits of this picture; I might submit in silence, for I am no connoisseur; but that it is disagreeable, a hateful picture, is an opinion which fire could not melt out of me. In spite of *Mesieurs les Connaisseurs*, and Michael Angelo's fame, I would die in it at the stake; for instance, here is the Blessed Virgin, not the *Vergine Santa, d'ogni grazia piena*, but a virgin, whose brick-dust colored face, harsh unfinished features, and muscular, masculine arms, give me the idea of a washerwoman (*con rispetto patrando!*), an infant Saviour with the perfections of a giant; and what shall we say of the nudity of the figures in the background; profaning the subject, and shocking at once good taste and good sense?"

We know the above finds place in a fictitious diary; but probably the sentiment, if not the precise expression of it, is in accordance with the authoress' own views. Compare with it the late William Ware's opinion, as given in his *European Capitals*:

"There hangs a picture on the right hand of the 'Venus di Medici,' in the Tribune, in a large circular frame, which at first attracts no attention from the spectator; but, on the contrary, from the reddish monotonous color, and strange arrangement of objects, is repulsive rather than otherwise. But on a more careful scrutiny you find that a great work is before you. A single figure is felt to stand out at length, from the unattractive canvas, clear and distinct, and to claim and compel an admiration and reverence beyond all others on the same subject. It is a picture of the Holy Family by Michael Angelo, one of the very few he has been known to have painted in oil, and like so many of his works, left unfinished. The figures constituting the piece are St. Joseph, the Virgin, the young Christ, and several other children and persons in the middle distance, which seem to be there for no conceivable reason, except to confuse the subject. But all this is of no moment; the whole picture is in the Virgin Mother. She sits as in solitude, though in the midst of many; the young Child with one arm thrown around her in an endearing manner, soliciting attention; but she heeds him not—still she sits alone—raised apparently above all earthly objects and thoughts—her face turned to Heaven, her eye looking intently upward, as if it reached *into Heaven*; yet a melancholy overspreads the face, as if while rapt out of herself by the moral glory of the unfolding ages, there was not concealed from her heart a prospect in the distance of Calvary and the Cross. The language of the face while exalted is also truly feminine and deeply sad. It was to me incomparably the noblest female head, for that subject, I ever saw in Art, and the only one worthy of the theme. If to this most remarkable figure, to this most expressive face, there had been added the other divinity of beauty—for beauty would not have been inconsistent with the theme—and that nameless charm of color, which gave even to Raffaelle such additional power, but which Michael Angelo almost despised, one work of Art would have been, the result to which the word Perfection might safely have been applied."